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GENERAL IS CHOSEN TO RULE ARGENTINA

Air Force and Navy Oppose the Naming of an Army Officer — 2 Senior Aides Quit

BUENOS AIRES, June 22 (AP) — The Argentine Army announced today that it would "assume the responsibility" for ruling the country and, despite objections from its junta partners, named a retired general as President.

The announcement came after a top air force general and a navy admiral resigned from the Government to protest the appointment of Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Benito Antonio Bignone as President.

There were reports that the air force and navy would pull altogether out of the day-to-day running of Argentina because a civilian was not appointed.

The two services were described as adamantly opposed to the naming of another army general after Lieut. Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri led Argentina to defeat in the war with Britain over the Falkland Islands.

A Reluctant Compromise

Sources close to the military said the three service chiefs in the junta would confer again only on purely military matters.

It was understood that General Bignone, a 54-year-old conservative administrator, was a reluctant compromise chosen to avoid the collapse of the 6-year-old military regime.

In a communiqué broadcast nationwide on radio and television, the army pledged to lead a "short-term transition Government" aimed at restoring civilian political rule "by the early months of 1984."

General Bignone, who served as secretary general in the presidential palace after the 1976 coup that deposed President Isabel Martínez de Perón, will take office on July 1, according to the communiqué.

The Interior Minister, Maj. Gen. Alfredo St. Jean of the army, was expected to continue until then as interim President.

General St. Jean assumed the presidency after the military ousted General Galtieri on Friday in the wake of Falkland fighting.

'Facts That Are Publicly Known'

Argentina seized the islands on April 2. Britain recaptured them on June 14, taking thousands of Argentine prisoners.

In resigning today as Planning Secretary, Gen. José Miret of the air force cited "the facts that are publicly known." He apparently meant the objections of air force and navy officers to the naming of an army man rather than a civilian to succeed General Galtieri.

The Social Action Minister, Vice Adm. Carlos Iacoste, also announced his resignation today.

In what may have been their last unified act, the three service commanders pledged earlier in the day to return Argentina to democratic rule by 1984. They also agreed to meet with "representative sectors" of the population to plan political, economic and social changes.

When the armed forces overthrew the populist Perón Government, they did not give any timetable for returning power to civilian politicians. General Galtieri, who was to have stayed in office until March 1984, once said, "The ballot boxes are tightly locked up."

The Argentine people put aside political differences to back General Galtieri in the military campaign to recover the Falklands from Britain. But after Argentines paid for the fight with lives, money and national pride, sentiment turned toward a return of democratic government.

"The nation belongs to everyone," the Buenos Aires newspaper La Nación said in its lead editorial today. "The return of democratic institutions must be in sight. The blood that was spilled urgently demands it."

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